THE COMMONWEAL

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WHITE HOUSE WAY

EVEN now few prophets will be venturesome enough to assert with finality that Mr. Coolidge will not succeed himself in 1928. A boom such as no man could resist lies in the offing, and it is merely a question as to which way the wind may blow. At any rate one believes that the President is the only man now living who might feel absolutely sure of a favorable verdict in 1928. Eliminate him and the campaign will become something like a justification of the traditional small boy's belief in political opportunity. In the Democratic camp, of course, Governor Smith has so definitely become the outstanding chieftain that in spite of doubts and hesitations his nomination may be expected. There is now no organization to contest his leadership, and no dominant individual to offset his popularity. But within the ranks of Republicanism chaos is rampant, not because attractive candidates are wanting but because it is always very difficult to adjust smoothly running machinery to a new focus.

Singularly enough, none of the western "farmer candidates" have impressed themselves strongly upon party opinion. The programs for which Mr. Lowden or Mr. Dawes have stood contain much that is salutary by way of comment upon matters of importance, but neither has aroused the nation. Their failure to emerge from semi-obscurity cannot be attributed entirely to the indifference of eastern states to the agricultural issue, or to sectionalism created by the distribution of publicity organs. To a surprising extent they have not convinced their own part of the world. The Middle-West is, to begin with, not at all agricultural in the sense that its destinies are controlled by the farm interests. It is doubtful, for instance, if Mr. Lowden could oust the eccentric Mr. Small from the governorship of Illinois, despite the fact that Mr. Lowden is admittedly a far more significant man. The political struggle between Chicago and the surrounding country is far too completely the supreme fact to permit other issues getting the upper hand. Even now that redoubtable enemy of King George, Mayor Thompson, is contesting the right of anybody else to the support of Illinois delegates to the Republican convention; and it is quite within the range of possibility that the bosom friend of the "horn" should actually blow himself a little way into the arena.

Everywhere in the Middle-West the situation is complicated by purely political conflicts between groups reflecting urban opinion and groups which support one or other of the evident agricultural urges. In Indiana the scene has been darkened by a Klan war, every phase of which has so badly compromised rural opinion that this cannot be expected to appear as a com-

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pact unit. Even in a state like Wisconsin, where insurgent Republicanism profits by a long tradition of civic reform and by war-engendered popularity, it is questionable whether a schism is not being fomented by discontented tax-payers, country- as well as city-bred. All in all, one feels that even if a certain program of agricultural relief were agreed upon by the overwhelming majority of farmers (and there is no likelihood of such agreement) it would be insufficient to stabilize an electoral opinion that veers between the two sides of debating about prohibition and taxation, the conduct of schools and civic corruption.

We believe it evident, therefore, that the next Republican standard-bearer will have to be a man who not only stands apart from the Middle-West but is also relatively non-committal on the subjects which have distracted voters there. One may be fairly sure that he will be a man who has had comparatively little to say about prohibition; who has not contributed anything essential to the discussion of the Klan; who is frankly favorable to, but open-minded about, agricultural relief; and who has never been involved in any of the special political battles which have disturbed the most important section of the country, from the point of view of political strategy. The number of those who meet these requirements, while not large, is still ample enough to justify considerable discussion. Whether Mr. Herbert Hoover, Mr. Nicholas Longworth or Mr. Charles Evans Hughes will be nominated remains to be seen; but unless all signs are misleading, the triumphant candidate will not be Senator Borah, Vice-President Dawes or ex-Governor Lowden.

The recipe for existing Republican success has been resolute impartiality toward all matters upon which the party does not stand committed by tradition. Everybody knows that the G. O. P. is for a protective tariff, for economy and for discreet national isolation. The recipe will, therefore, not be abandoned until some such shocking event as a vital change in public opinion has occurred. Like certain famous "sound principles" which flourish in business, Republican conservatism is a thing against which protests are vain so long as the enterprise is in a flourishing condition. One may feel that a timid aloofness from affairs of international moment is hardly worthy of a great people; that United States action in Latin America is shadowy if not wholly dark; and that genuine statesmanship, interested in the civic progress of the population as a whole, could not afford (as Dr. Butler has so often intimated) to ignore the consequences of the Eighteenth Amendment. Nevertheless our governmental enterprise is going ahead smoothly and economically, bad investments have been curtailed to a minimum, and millions of stock-holders are too well satisfied to do more than argue about a change.

Admittedly, however, the appearance of Governor Smith as the generalissimo of the opposition would mean an extraordinary challenge to Republican security. Certain secondary aspects of his personality must no doubt be termed weaknesses. He is a Catholic; he has committed himself on the subject of prohibition; his origins as a political leader are identified with Tammany Hall. These are reasons why some voters will refuse to follow him, but they are also reasons why other voters will follow him cheerfully. The possible loss here is offset by a possible gain. It is rather the fundamental principle which a man like Governor Smith thrusts in upon the consciousness of voters that constitutes the gage of battle. Here is a man who frankly does not believe that "economy" for its own sake is a good rule of government. During the course of one of the most brilliant of all administrations of New York State, he has resolutely used money to provide community advantages for those who need them. Faithful to the idea that while the state is never a kind of benevolent patriarch, eager to right every wrong with the "personal" touch, it is properly the only existing institution which can make living in common something really like living, he has transferred the ideal of municipal advancement to the larger field of state government. To carry it still farther—to the scene of national affairs as a whole—would mean the end of counting dollars saved, and the beginning of progressive investments. It would mean, for example, that something would really be done about the flood situation in the Mississippi valley. It might even mean, though neither Governor Smith nor any of the other Democratic leaders has done more than a very little to further the progress of agricultural relief, that there would be more open-mindedness concerning the problems of economic distribution.

Unless we are very much mistaken, the coming campaign will present a clear-cut contrast—a difference of mind about the character and conduct of the nation's business—such as has been quite unfamiliar during recent years. It should be dramatic enough to be interesting, with excellent evidence on both sides. But unless the central issue is resolutely insisted upon, all the fighting may be done round about little points of no importance excepting in so far as they are torches to partisan feeling. Neither party can afford to become the single-track champion of agricultural relief, prohibition or international isolation. These problems cannot be solved if they are viewed as national philosophies, and not as important phases of the nation's business. Similarly it is certain that no appeal to group animosities would do anybody any good.

That is why one rejoices in the confidence that, whoever is selected by Republicanism to urge the continuation of its policy upon the American people, he will not be a man likely to repudiate the party's habits of fairness and public-spiritedness. After all, it is a good test of the success of our democratic institutions when there are so many men who might commendably fill the office of chief executive. Unless the conventions fail miserably, the next election will mean an actual choice between parties and principles—not a preference between ever so dapper persons.

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THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

REUNION, faith and order are being considered by representatives of some sixty-seven churches at Lausanne, Switzerland. Although the Catholic Church is not a party to the discussion, the Holy Father's approval of it and his promise of prayer in its behalf have been reëchoed pretty well down the line of Catholic opinion. No doubt there are many charitable persons who will kneel, these days, before the Real Presence and invoke a blessing upon those who have assembled for a purpose good in motive and highly important in scope. But whether much really effective work can be accomplished at such a conference is another question. Personal contact between men who have each been confined throughout life to a particular series of experiences and prepossessions does, in the intellectual and spiritual life, often prove fruitful. We know that among illustrious French converts to Catholicism—Père Charles de Foucauld, missionary and martyr of the Sahara, being one of them—the impression made by the deep religious spirit of the Moslem world was a deciding influence. The Lausanne meeting, moreover, is the result of quite a different development from those which were reflected in the Lambeth and Stockholm conferences. It owes its realization to the initiative taken during 1920, by the general convention of the American Episcopal Church; and this in a measure complements the endeavors to establish reunion put forward by the Anglicans. So many aspirations toward Christian unity in a chaotic age surely cannot go unrewarded or unblessed.

THE death of Major-General Leonard Wood has taken away from the army one of its most highly esteemed officers. Though political fortune decided that he could not be identified in any prominent manner with the American world-war expedition, he typified better than all other men the "frontier fighting" which characterized an era of national expansion. His genuine gifts as an administrative officer were proved in Cuba, the Philippines and elsewhere. However vigorously the Filipino leaders may have protested against a system which bade fair to stave off independence indefinitely, they unanimously recognized the sincerity and integrity of General Wood. With his passing the problem of what to do about the Philippines becomes more acute than ever. We are not inclined to doubt that recent overtures to place the islands under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior, as prepared for by the travels of Colonel Carmi Thompson, mean anything but a step toward native independence. Such a change can only mean that the ideal of "development" will supersede the ideal of "administration" which has guided the War Department; and "development" means more aggressive exploitation of the islands and a consequent staving off of the grant of independence. When one remembers the fact that the government of the United States promised to make the islands free "as soon as possible," one finds the present prospect none too reassuring.

THE Irish Republican party's sudden decision to take the oath of allegiance and so enter the Dail will seem a strange aftermath to the O'Higgins murder. Not only has Mr. De Valera failed to assist those who are trying to discover the agents of assassination, but he appears to have reasoned that it ought to be followed up with a frontal attack upon the Cosgrave government. Forty-five Republican votes are ample to divert control of the political situation to the labor group, if the latter desires to exploit its manifest dissatisfaction with existing conditions. We are asked to believe that the Free State brought this storm upon its own head by introducing a bill requiring political candidates to promise to assume the burden of their responsibilities when elected. More probably, however, the Republican action is the result of a growing feeling that mere gestures of protest, interspersed sometimes with violence on both sides, are not enough to make the destiny of Ireland what the idealists of freedom feel it ought to be. The decision to take the oath while considering it a mere formality raises a nice moral question. It is difficult to see how an oath can be anything but a solemn promise binding upon the consciences of those who, like Mr. De Valera, profess the faith of Christians. But the Irish Republicans, not we who watch them, are shouldering that responsibility. Ours is the real hope that such progress as has been made under the Free State Dail will not be wholly obliterated by new and sanguinary party violences in the dubious future.

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ONCE more the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti has been postponed. This time the way is cleared for further judicial action; and if the result should be confirmation of the jury decision that the two are guilty of murder, everything that can be done in justice for the two men will have been accomplished. It will soon be impossible to believe that the Massachusetts authorities and the citizens with whom they have coöperated are all biased and blind, or that the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee is the only group which views the matter clearly and honestly. Unfortunately, however, this is merely one aspect of the situation. The other and perhaps the more important aspect is manifest wherever a crowd gathers to express its sympathy with the condemned men. Days of demonstrating in cities like New York or Boston impose a very costly burden upon the community, enkindle acts of violence, and give forces of anarchy which would normally be despised and ridiculed an amount of advertising which in a democratic country would "put over" even far less well-organized and alluring causes. Seven years of wrangling over circumstantial evidence, of sheer stubbornness on the part of a judge whom public opinion widely regards as prejudiced, and of an obvious timidity about bringing the matter to a close, have cooked up a tense excitement which has got on a great many people's nerves and which is likely to cause more damage than a dozen murders. If all this is "deterring crime," one must honestly believe that the enterprise will flourish for a long time. Had Sacco and Vanzetti been sentenced to life imprisonment five years ago, one may affirm with what amounts to virtual certitude that not more than a few dozen people would know their names and addresses.

HOW serious some of the social implications of this trial are may be inferred from an address reported to have been given at a luncheon of the Lions Club by Mr. Ralph Ingalls, of Portland, Maine. "Let us tell all red-blooded Americans that we in Maine stand four-square for old-fashioned methods," he told a cheering audience. "If there must be a Red fight in Massachusetts, we will be there as we were at Lexington. I say, call out the militia, put the Reds on a boat and send them back to the land from which they came. We do not want them here!" We certainly do not. On the other hand, Mr. Ingalls' plan for saving the nation is open to a few minor objections. It might really be inconvenient to give him control of the militia and fill up a boatload of whomsoever he happened to dislike. Even the "Reds" brought to the fore by the Sacco-Vanzetti case could reasonably object that most of their number are quite as near the battle of Lexington as he. Boston has jailed and fined a more than faintly pink member of the James family, and the roster of those who made a "pilgrimage of protest" to the scene of action was very strongly flavored with New England nomenclature. Finally the militia itself, as one judges from the names of its privates and corporals, seems very badly infected with those near-European, anti-Nordic traits which Mr. Ingalls seems to despise. The Lions could do no greater service for the public in the present emergency than assigning certain of their after-luncheon speakers to some quiet place where sound is lost upon the native American woodland.

ALTHOUGH the recent convention of the Knights of Columbus, held at Portland, Oregon, was marked by no unusual development, it emphasized the solidarity and good will of the order as a whole. The retirement of Mr. Flaherty from the office he has filled so long and in general so commendably, the words of praise which came from the lips of the apostolic delegate, and the temperate though firm consideration of the Mexican situation—these were the events which stood out as significant in the news reports. One was particularly glad to hear the representative of the Holy Father say: "I am exceedingly happy at this hour to bring his fatherly and affectionate blessing and cordial good wishes to you who have won his admiration and his distinct approval." Of late there has been not merely considerable criticism of the organization by its members, but a distinct falling off in numbers. No doubt much of this has its origin in mistakes made by officials here and there, who have failed to bear in mind the purposes of the order and the intelligent dignity with which its affairs ought to be conducted. But much of it seems attributable also to a habit of criticizing for criticism's sake—a deplorable practice at all times, but especially undesirable in organizations existing for an avowedly religious purpose. Similar habits have killed a great many Catholic activities here and in other countries. If those who cannot approve would be content to withdraw in silence, the order would profit by the lesson; but too frequently the dissatisfied indulge in bitter antagonisms which merely create factions and bring constructive work to an undeserved halt.

DR. EDWARD A. FITZPATRICK, whose paper on university education aroused much interest among Commonweal readers, addressed some remarks to the recent Catholic Educational Association convention which may be quoted here without any comment excepting approval: "One of the most insidious and demoralizing ideas in colleges is the notion or ideal, as you please, of institutional completeness. Perhaps there is no greater waste or misuse of educational resources than the attempt of institutions to undertake work for which they are not prepared with trained personnel, adequate equipment and sufficient funds. It constitutes what President Pritchet refers to euphemistically as a lack of educational patriotism. A term which he defines not euphemistically, but bluntly and directly as: 'A university (any educational institution) has a mission greater than the formation of a large student body or the attainment of institutional com-

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pleteness, namely, the duty of loyalty to the standards of common honesty, of intellectual sincerity, of scientific accuracy . . . .'

"THE situation does not call for a multiplication of graduate schools. This can do only harm, unless such schools are established in accordance with appropriate standards. In fact, if anything, the actual situation probably calls for a reduction of graduate schools, where the present achievement is low and the probabilities of improvement slight. The severest criticism of Catholic graduate schools should come from within the group. No motto of 'getting by,' but eminent service, should be the guiding spirit. And no other ideal will serve. A graduate school based on mediocrity, routine instruction, academic bookkeeping merely, is only a name. Intellectual distinction, eminent achievement, the highest standards—these must characterize every aspect of the graduate school."

AMERICAN and English lovers of the Brontës (and how many there are!) are entitled to an equal share of satisfaction over the news that the relics collected and given to the Haworth museum by Mr. Bonnell of Philadelphia are to be housed henceforth in the old vicarage which has been purchased by a patriotic Scotsman, Sir James Allen, and will be presented to the nation, or rather to the world, as a perpetual shrine. There are authors, and very great ones, concerning whose homes our interest is a sentimental rather than an essential part of hero-worship. This is not the case with the Brontë sisters. Without Haworth and its bleak manse overlooking the moors on one side and the grim graveyard on the other, the great novels would be incomplete and conjectural. However far toward infinity the thought of the sisters soared (and there are times, when, like that of King Lear, their language almost bursts mortal bonds) it never failed to drop for rest to the dear familiar things, the "res angusta" of home, loved all the more passionately because they were held on so pitifully fragile a tenure. Pilgrims to the sullen moorland village which was the cradle of so much spectral genius will feel doubly privileged henceforth as they gaze on the hundred little relics that dead fingers once handled, and remember the words in which the greatest of the three sisters summed up their stoic attitude toward fate which makes the Brontë story so unforgettably poignant: "Death itself had not the terrors for me that it holds for the gently nurtured."

SAFETY and the automobile are still contrasted in American experience. Although the official reports for the year indicate a drop in the number of casualties proportionate to the number of vehicles in operation, the list is still long and tragic. Much can be accomplished by campaigns against drivers' vices, by more rigid inspection of those who apply for licenses, and by a careful enforcement of the laws. Even greater vigilance will have to be expended, however, if we are to get over the habit of offering annual holocausts to speed. This year the evidence clearly inculpates drivers of trucks, who are proved responsible for the majority of accidents. It may be said in their behalf that greater reason exists for attempting to save time. They are vehicles in the employ of business which must deduct the cost of their operation from the total profit, and which is often hard pressed to make the multitudinous deliveries to which the public has grown accustomed. The drivers, therefore, make use of the size and weight of their machines to frighten everyone else out of the way, and rely upon deafening klaxons to put whole blocks to flight. Obviously there is need of special legislation regarding them. Making it a punishable offense not to slow down at corners to a definite speed, and similar regulations, can do much. But possibly it would be especially salutary to prohibit department stores from making deliveries of parcels under a certain weight, thus forcing a multitude of customers to share in a movement for "safety first" which is so often and so easily delegated to others. In any case, some limitation of the size and weight of the vehicles permitted to use the state highways is a measure of public safety badly overdue.

CIVIC honors conferred by a majority of two in a town council of sixty-two cannot be a source of unalloyed gratification, and Sir Harry Lauder, who is a freeman of Edinburgh by no wider margin, must be giving more thought to the susceptibilities of his fellow-countrymen than at any previous period during the course of his hilarious and profitable career. The kilt and bonnet, the spiral walking-stick, the broad accent and the loping walk, which have brought capacity houses in England and America, do not appeal to Sir Harry's compatriots, one of whom ventured the suggestion that such a type of Scotsman, if encountered in the flesh on the streets of Edinburgh or Glasgow, would be carted off, without benefit of certificate, to the nearest asylum. Politics seem to have got mixed up in the discussion, the popular entertainer having had to encounter the charge of being "a Tory propagandist." However, we need not look to this motive to account for the narrow majority that welcomed him into the civic bosom. Tetchiness where national peculiarities are concerned is very much in the air just now, and the lesson of the Lauder mix-up would seem to be that the man who exploits them for profit must look elsewhere than at home for his reward. The "spiritual" Negro, and the Celtic gunman are already fairly established figures upon our stage. What are we going to substitute for the traditional Scot with his weakness for haggis and bagpipes, his tendency to combine oatmeal and whiskey at meals and his reluctance, quite unfounded in fact, to bid farewell to "saxpence"? Perhaps the dour Edinburgh councilors who started all the trouble in the first place will take care of it.

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JUSTICE AT MIDNIGHT

IT IS a pity that news is not accompanied from day to day with a convenient diagrammatic summary of all that has gone before. Half of one's morning indignations and surprises are due to the fact that some event which might be intelligible and quite normal if seen as part of a sequence suddenly stands out alone and inexplicable. We believe that the waves of emotion which have accompanied every stage of the Sacco-Vanzetti battle are in large measure due to a succession of lightning-like emotional climaxes, stirring people deeply, awakening their consciousness of feelings bound up with fundamental social and moral experience, and banding them together in a kind of community of indignation. The fact that in every city the fate of two anarchists has aroused the publicly expressed sympathy of great throngs who would refuse to listen to any reasoned argument for anarchy is likely to be remembered in history for some time. It shows what can be done by suggesting night after night, morning after morning, some fact or impassioned statement which shocks the world's conscience.

Obviously the men who have thus far judged Sacco and Vanzetti were completely unaffected by the emotions which flamed up at so many protest meetings. They examined a lengthy and complicated record of details, compiled during years of incessant legal wrangling. To them the sole question was whether the facts in the case established or did not establish the guilt of the accused. In answering, they had necessarily to depend upon their consciences, their unprejudiced eyesight and their appreciation of the public welfare. The most important among them — Judge Thayer—is suspected on good testimony of having been deficient in all three respects. Concerning the others it is possible to say that they were not used to the sifting of evidence, and that as public representatives of the established social order they were necessarily inclined to give the court the benefit of the doubt. Nevertheless they all were dependent upon, associated with, a large number of other citizens—witnesses, jurors, experts—who likewise viewed the facts in the case more or less dispassionately.

Is emotion or calm reflection better calculated to arrive at truth in the matter? Is the sympathetic public right or is the state of Massachusetts right? All one can say is that both are likely to err, have erred time and time again throughout history. Many a condemned man has gone to his death on the basis of evidence far less carefully weighed than that which brought our two Italian anarchists into the shadow of the chair. It is certain, however, that with each year public feeling is taking a greater interest in, is making up its mind more resolutely about, criminal cases. The courts are being watched through millions of eyes which, as Lincoln said, "cannot be fooled all the time." What is that going to mean? Simply, as the past informs us in so many ways, that the ultimates of legal procedure will have to be modified. Justice at midnight—the ghastly march to death through the passages of a jail from which all hope is barred—will rouse and even infuriate whole multitudes who feel some common bond with the victim. During ages gone by crowds have knelt in the streets, weeping and praying for a condemned man on his way to the stake. Today, when these crowds have more power, there is likely to be less of petition and tears, more of vengeance and disorder.

Whether Sacco and Vanzetti will die is one thing. Whether the system under which they were sentenced to die can be maintained is another thing. No world of common people will overlook such facts as that two Italian laborers were dealt with mercilessly on the basis of circumstantial evidence in Massachusetts, while two scions of wealthy families were treated compassionately in Illinois although the hideous thing they did was established to the last detail. A few more such coincidences and no criminal court in this country will be safe, no plea for law and order will curb vindictive mobs. We must learn to reckon with the fact that our country is no longer a series of isolated commonwealths, news in each of which used to be only of local interest, but a compact society welded together by certain common symbols, the most important of which is justice. Chicago had nothing to say to the Governor of Massachusetts regarding his conduct in this case, but Chicago became the scene of wild excitement as a result of what he decided to do.

America may have to come round to some arrangement whereby all cases which end in a verdict of death will have to be reviewed by a higher federal court, established by law to authorize no execution unless all doubt of guilt has been removed. We may finally have to give up the real deterrent value of capital punishment in order to avoid the risk of greater evils. Meanwhile, however, our attention is drawn to the urgent necessity of promoting all the preventive endeavors which students recommend as the best of weapons against disorder. Certainly anarchy is not one of these. Its essence is violence, its philosophic basis is the denial of all those transcendent moral values by which the conduct of the majority can be governed. And the greatest blow which has been dealt to American life through the misconduct of the Sacco-Vanzetti case is the fact that it has given anarchy, in one form or other, a wider hearing than it ever received before. Surely there must be a better way of handling such problems. It is inconceivable that Massachusetts is right even if the men it has condemned are really guilty. For we who are not anarchists or condoners of murder, we who in common with thousands of other men and women are interested in public affairs, have been left unconvinced by the evidence, unable to trust some of the men who officially weighed that evidence, and powerless to affect that tremendous outburst of feeling which has brought this country nearer to the brink of serious disturbance than it has been in years.

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THE POET OF THE SHADOWS

By PADRAIC COLUM

"NOR was I indeed ignorant of the flowers and the vine, but the hemlock and the cypress overshadowed me night and day." So Poe wrote, giving a likely image of his life. Israfel* is the first biography we have had that gives the effect that is in this sentence—the effect of a life shadowed by disaster, but never abject, and with occasions of realization and of glory.

Hervey Allen is a poet, and so has been able to understand what Poe had to do in order to realize himself as a poet. Fortunately circumstanced in that he knows the southern states and that, not being a Southerner, he has had no illusions as to what the South, in the thirties and forties, was able to do for a poet, he has conducted a real investigation into the life and times of Poe. His book is a moving and well-proportioned narrative, and it is also a sound piece of biography.

He makes us a contemporary of Poe's; we enter the strange America of the middle period with its total lack of any point of focus, with its domination by a merchant class, with its financial instability, its beginnings of rapid transportation and expansion toward the west. And becoming a contemporary in that inchoate America we understand why the publication of a book could bring Poe no financial returns, why Richmond, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York became successive places of sojourn for a man who wanted to make a living by doing editorial work, and why Edgar Allan Poe should have appeared to his contemporaries as a type to be discountenanced—as a Virginia "bad man."

The part of his life spent in Richmond with the Allans, the part extending from his early childhood until past his adolescence, formed Edgar Allan Poe. It gave him his southern bias, his attitude of being a "Virginian." It is only now, when all the papers have become accessible, that it is possible to make us realize what dramatic passages there were in it. John Allan, the Scotch merchant, held out against his wife's formally adopting the child of the strolling players. Edgar's position in the household, for that reason, was insecure. That was the beginning of the poet's misfortunes. After he had entered the University of Virginia, the break came that turned Poe away forever from a home, from the kindness of a foster-mother and the expectation of fortune and position. Edgar Poe was not to blame for the turn events took then; he had gambled a little at the university—that was all that could be brought against him. It would be easy to claim that John Allan's stinginess brought about the disastrous break. But the new biographer, with an access to an extraordinarily complete set of documents and with a real power of interpreting them, does not see it in a light as simple as that. He has this to say:

> Like all important and long-enduring human relationships, it was very, very complex. John Allan and Edgar Poe loved each other. In the inmost realm of the spirit they were father and son. Time and fate had made them so. That is the only satisfactory explanation of the enormous agitation behind their correspondence; the reason why, in spite of all, they could never quite break it off. Even on the last West Point letter, the older man endorses "He may do or act as he pleases though I would have saved him but on his own terms . . ." In the last analysis it was John Allan's sensuousness and obstinacy that ruined the two finest associations of his remarkable life. It killed Frances Allan and it blasted Poe. The strange, Scotch parsimony was only a concomitant.

What actually came between Edgar and John Allan, now that the papers are all available, can clearly be surmised. John Allan had illegitimate children.

> Frances Allan seems to have become aware of her husband's unfaithfulness, and the knowledge which was then or afterwards shared by Edgar, brought the two together in an aggrieved compact that was inevitably against, and probably extremely exasperating to, John Allan.

And so the young poet, brought up under prosperous circumstances and with definite prospects, was cast upon the world. From that period until the day of his death his life was a tale of misfortune. Just as he was making a name for himself, just as he was regaining some health and sanity, came the terrible disaster of his life, when the girl-wife who was his cousin burst a blood-vessel and added hemorrhages to her tuberculosis, forcing a care and a terror upon him that took away the vitality and the sanity he possessed. When she died, he was only thirty-eight, but his creative life was over. Ill-luck followed him beyond the grave: his literary executor was a man who had a long-concealed hatred for Poe, and who took the grand opportunity given him by the task of editing and writing an introduction to his works to damn the poet as a drunkard and a man who did not pay his debts.

In spite of bad luck, semi-starvation, anxieties of every kind, Poe did his work and did it extensively. The reproach that the children of the market-place are so apt to bring against men of letters—the reproach of disinclination for work—cannot be made against Edgar Allan Poe. When we look through the body of work which he turned out in his eighteen years of productive life—poems, stories, essays—and when

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Israfel: The Life and Times of Edgar Allan Poe, by Hervey Allen. New York: George H. Doran Company. Two volumes, $10.00.

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we consider that his kind of work involved study, intellectual construction, constant revision, we know that there could have been few people in the United States at the time more industrious than he. Poe's work meant not only labor—it meant heroism. For a man to have produced such work as he produced, in spite of illness, disappointment, lack of appreciation, great sorrow, and the debility brought on by indulgence in opium, required an effort as heroic as an air-flight from New York to Paris. And there were no prizes to be received, no crowds to cheer, when the effort had been accomplished.

To read this life of Poe—the only life of him that has been written with any humanity, with any sympathy—is to be contantly and deeply moved. Here is a man of surpassing gifts who only asks of the world that it give him an opportunity of doing his work in some other state than that of abject misery; here is his wife, a simple and pitiable girl; here is his aunt and mother-in-law, a woman who stands for everything that the world approves of—work, orderliness, devotedness to her family—and yet these three people have to know hunger, and cold, and uncheered illness. Poe and his wife Virginia might have perished of want had it not been for the exertions of Mrs. Clemm. She worked for them, begged for them, took turnips out of fields on moonlit nights so that there might be something in the pot for them. No one who reads certain poignant passages that are in this biography can ever forget Mrs. Clemm. We first meet her in Baltimore at a time when another destitute person is being added to her household in the person of Edgar Poe. His bed-ridden grandmother, his tubercular brother Henry and the little girl Virginia made up the household, and all were taken care of by Mrs. Clemm:

> Fortunately for a great poet, Mrs. Clemm had a knack, a technique, indeed, which she soon acquired, of cutting under all intelligence and stabbing straight for the heart. She belonged in one part of her nature to that great, dark-garmented sisterhood that her own black widow's weeds recalled, those who are forever flitting from door to door reminding the conventionally prosperous that poverty, bastardy, and suffering are mysteriously present facts and that alms are in order. Much as, from innate respectability, she hated her rôle, Mrs. Clemm played it surpassingly well. She was in this respect a little half-sister of Saint Francis. Her lips, her gestures and her own sacrifices pleaded for starving old age, childhood and irresponsible genius. Only editors could resist, and even they did so with tears. On several occasions Mrs. Clemm actually borrowed money from anthologists. Charity records no more signal triumph.

Poe composed his prose poem about the universe, Eureka, walking up and down with Mrs. Clemm, his arm around her, hers around him.

> He would stop every few minutes and explain his ideas to me, and ask if I understood them. [This was during the woeful period that followed Virginia's death.] I always sat up with him when he was writing, and gave him a cup of hot coffee every hour or two.

Israfel is sound biography for the sound reason that it projects a character to whom we can refer Ligeia and The Pit and the Pendulum, William Wilson and The Cask of Amontillado, The Raven and Annabel Lee, Eureka and The Philosophy of Composition. When we read this book we understand the depths that these creations came out of: behind all the ingenuity of the stories there is an experience, a moral element, that leaves them superior to stories by the accomplished writers who have used Poe's methods and his material. William Wilson, for all its bombast and melodrama, has a significance that Robert Louis Stevenson and Oscar Wilde were unable to give their stories of a divided life, and it has that significance because Poe really knew what it was to have a divided life. He writes agonizingly about haunted men because he himself had had reason to feel haunted. He can make us feel the terror of the descent into the maelstrom, because he knew what it was to have the waters of a whirlpool close over him. He writes powerfully about torments because he himself was a tormented man. He projects finely the character of a reasoner, because he had to prove to himself that he was rational and not getting near to madness. Finally, and this is very clearly shown by Hervey Allen, the stories of terrible revenges of which the greatest is The Cask of Amontillado, are dramatizations of his notion of his own shrewdness in dealing with a persecuting world. His method can never be acquired by way of study: many of his stories owe their genesis to opium; and the method itself, as Hervey Allen says, is simply the rationalization of a dream.

And so he can report with extraordinary literalness and lucidity the last swoon of the nerves as in the passage describing the sensations of one who has just been sentenced to death by the Inquisition:

> But then, all at once, there came a most deadly nausea over my spirit, and I felt every fibre in my frame thrill as if I had touched the wire of a galvanic battery, while the angel forms became meaningless spectres, with heads of flame, and I saw that from them there would be no help.

His mentality was a rare synthesis; he had elements in him that corresponded with the indefiniteness of music and the exactitude of mathematics.

He had a deep knowledge of the mental movements connected with fear:

> There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition . . . served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis.

So he writes in The Fall of the House of Usher, and the statement reads like a pronouncement from

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a chair of psychology. In Arthur Gordon Pym he has an observation on the effect of a ghostly apparition:

> Usually, in cases of similar nature, there is left in the mind of the spectator some glimmering of a doubt as to the reality of the vision before his eyes; a degree of hope, however feeble, that he is the victim of chicanery, and that the apparition is not actually a visitant from the old world of shadows. It is not too much to say that such remnants of doubt have been at the bottom of almost every such visitation, and that the appalling horror which has sometimes been brought about is to be attributed, even in cases most in point, and where most suffering has been experienced, more to a kind of anticipative horror, lest the apparition might possibly be real, than to any unwavering belief in its reality.

This passage gives us a clue to one of the holds that Poe has upon us. He is, first of all, a teller of ghost stories. The ordinary ghost story has become crude and mechanical for us about the time we begin to read his stories: then we come upon William Wilson, The Fall of the House of Usher, Ligeia—superfine ghost stories. And it is not in these stories only—stories where there is definitely a supernatural element—that we get the chill and thrill of ghostliness: we get it out of stories of his that have no supernatural element, stories like The Murders in the Rue Morgue and The Pit and the Pendulum. The thrill of the ghost story comes from the fact that we are brought shudderingly to the verge of a discovery. There is the "anticipative horror" that Poe has spoken of. When, in The Murders in the Rue Morgue, Dupin leads the teller of the tale to see the killer of Madame L'Espanaye and her daughter is not a human being; and when, in The Pit and the Pendulum, the teller of the tale finds that

> My chin rested upon the floor of my prison, but my lips, and the upper portion of my head, although seemingly at less elevation than the chin, touched nothing,

we feel something of the "anticipative horror" that belongs to a ghost story. And of course we feel it even more fully when, in Ligeia, the teller of the story sees the shadow of an invisible presence upon the carpet, and when, in The Fall of the House of Usher, we hear the sounds in the vault below that lead up to the return of the Lady Madeline.

After we have known Poe as a teller of ghost stories and detective stories we come to know him as the poet of The Bells and The Raven—poems that excite us by their technical mastery, by the exuberance of their rhymes and chimes. Later on we come to see that poems like to Helen, Annabel Lee, The Haunted Palace and The Conquering Worm are unique creations. About the same time we begin to understand the implications of The Philosophy of Composition, and to recognize the daring imagination and the astonishing knowledge that has been lavished upon the impossible theme of Eureka. Poe, then, is not only a story-teller like Robert Louis Stevenson; he is not only a poet such as Robert Bridges. He is one of those men whose ideas have modified a conception of the arts and have created new tendencies in the intellectual life of a part of the human race. Our minds have really been altered by the fact that this man, in spite of endless difficulties, put into rhythm and into words a significant part of his own inner life.

STOWAWAYS

By MARY FAGIN

WHO are they? Where do they come from and why? We have heard of them, we have read about them—a dreaded lot, the scum of the earth, yet romantic figures for all that. Nomads of the sea, people without a country, unwanted in any port. And then one chances to see them, to meet them, to know them.

At Ellis Island they arrive cumbrously accompanied, as though they were under age limit, or of royal blood, or ridiculously rich. But those who accompany them are not of the usual kind—mild, subservient and fawning. Instead they are big, calloused men, specially chosen because they know how to swing a club. Stowaways are dangerous creatures and must be carefully guarded.

Their very appearance is dangerous. Uncombed, unwashed, ragged, very ragged, at times even barefooted, they come following one another in a row, in pairs if hand-cuffed. They come wobbling between two guards who, frequently, overshadow them. For the guards are always bigger and even more dangerous-looking than the stowaways. A wise precaution, for who can tell what a string of such creatures are apt to do at an impulse? Irrespective of race and nationality they almost always apear black, coal-black. They come from the stoke-hold where they have fed the steamer and, as compensation, have been fed in return, and then, upon landing, given over to the immigration authorities.

Ellis Island has no use for stowaways. "They are all alike, good for nothing," runs the saying about them. Yet are they all alike? For each one looks different and each one has a different story to tell when called upon to testify before the Board of Special Inquiry.

"Don't ask me why!" a stowaway says to the Board. Yet in his answers to various questions he tells his story. A disconnected story. His eyes are wide open, clear and frank; he speaks with firm and fearless lips and there is no guilt in his voice. Yes, he has always

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worked. He has had to work from his early childhood; he hasn't minded it, but work is all he has known. Work, work, unremunerative work. He has waited for something to happen; he doesn't know exactly for what. He has worked and waited. He has known neither education nor love; he seems to have been stuck into a little hole in the world. Restlessness grew within him.

The Board is not interested in his life story and he is urged to answer more directly to their questions.

"I want to live! You understand, live!" His claw-like fist trembles in the air. "Yes, I left a wife and two children." He is calm now. "Nine years ago I got married. I thought I wanted love and someone to live with, you understand. But I didn't get it. It was just more work. And my hunger to see the world was gnawing me and I let loose. You see, I am thirty-six already and I haven't lived yet. I mean—"

He is ordered to sit down. The Board comments:

"Some rebel."

"A nut, I think."

But another stowaway has come up. He is not washed yet. His eyes and teeth are the only clean features in his face. He is unable to read and admits having been arrested for many different crimes.

"I can't help it, I don't know myself why I do such bad things. I guess it's because my father and mother haven't taught me any better. They too are often arrested. When at times I get lazy and stay at home they scold me and say that a fellow of nineteen should be able to pull off big jobs. But I don't like to pull big jobs. It's always done at night in the dark and I am afraid. That is why I ran away. I don't want to be a thief."

"Why then were you kept here in the cellar for three days?" a juror asks.

"That wasn't stealing. My suit is so torn I can't wear it any longer. Look at it!" He holds on to his loose garments and pleads with the interpreter: "Tell them, please, I just thought I'd put on the other fellow's suit; he had another one in his valise, tell them that."

"Take the poor devil down to the social workers, they'll doll him up," the chairman orders the messenger of the Board room.

A stowaway in hospital clothes. Ever since his arrival he has been in the hospital, isolated, because of a contagious disease. He is shaved, washed, combed, cleanly dressed, and yet he is unclean. . . . His record tells that part of his story.

"I didn't mean to stow away." He speaks in English. "Jest came on the ship to say goodby to a lady friend 'f mine. Got to talkin' and talkin', you know how 'tis, and 'fore we knew it we were sailin'."

There are some delicate questions for him to answer and he speaks hesitatingly. He is eager to know whether he will be permitted to land. He is sure that his lady friend will pay his passage. The Board informs him that it is not a matter of paying passage only. He is not a fit person to land. He is also notified that his lady friend is to be on the same ship that will carry him back. He is returned to the hospital.

A lady stowaway or more correctly, a she-stowaway—a rare occurrence. Her ladyship is being questioned, since she permitted herself to be so infamous an immigrant. But there she is. A young, bold-featured girl of a healthy disposition. She puzzles the Board members. With a smiling face and in a light tone of voice she tells them of her escapade. They doubt her story but she sticks to it and they cannot refute it. One member of the Board thinks her vivacious; another, crude; still another, a disgrace to her sex. She thinks herself as brave as the winds.

"Pray, tell me what's wrong with me?" She smiles at the Board. The members exchange smiles and that is their answer. She talks on.

"Hasn't any of you ever put up a bet of some kind? I often do, and crossing the ocean as a stowaway is just another. Some of my friends thought I wouldn't dare to tackle this one, but here I am," she concludes, shrugging her shoulders.

"But for a young la—girl," a juror quickly corrects himself.

"A young girl. How long is a person's life all together? A bet is a bet. Everybody is privileged to have some fun. I'll be dead when I'll be dead." The girl's tone is indifferent to the opinion of the Board. She refuses to sign an appeal blank for admission, since she has come only to go back.

And here is one who could hardly be taken for a stowaway by his appearance. But then he was discovered at the very gate of Ellis Island. He had escaped the stoke-hold. Clever. This stowaway is handsome and handsomely dressed. There is something about him that bespeaks intelligence, education and refinement. His head and eyes are bent toward the ground. He seems to be ashamed of his act.

"Why I did it?" In a mellow voice he tells the Board why he stowed away. It was all due to the chaotic period. War, revolution, political tangles, these things don't interest him. He is an artist. All his life he has been one. To him painting a war is bigger than fighting one. He was afraid that the European turmoil would strangle his art and he was running away, saving himself and his gift. And as, without identification papers, he couldn't obtain a passport or visa for the United States, he somehow managed to stow away.

"Not a very artistic thing to do for a man of twenty-five," a member comments.

"I did it for art's sake, you understand!" his nostrils breathe heavily. He is silenced and told to sit down.

The next stowaway is only twelve years old. He is just tall enough to reach the court table with his chin. His clothes are clean. He too escaped the stoke-hold. He was made to do kitchen work. He liked it, he says. The captain and everybody else liked him and

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were good to him. He is a bit too nervous when the questioning begins. His face is like that of a baby whimpering in fear of a stern voice. This little illegitimate immigrant knows that he is accused of something terrible and he is greatly afraid. But his story is straight and interesting and pathetic. Of course he wouldn't have done such a thing had his father lived; and even now he wouldn't have done it—but his mother and little sister had nothing to eat. He must provide for them as his father had once done.

The Board is sympathetic. They tell him that in America he will not be allowed to work until he is sixteen years old, and that until then he will have to go to school. And what could he do anyway? Did he know a trade? Did he ever work before?

"Of course I worked before! And on the steamer they told me that I peeled potatoes best. You see, my mother taught me how to peel them thin." His little face beams with pride and he outlines before the Board all his plans. He will work during the day and go to school during the evening. He is not afraid of work. He can do lots of things. Then with the aid of his uncle, his father's brother, he will send for his mother and sister. They will be happy together. His mother can work too. In Constantinople there isn't much work for strangers.

The Board sends him off with the comment: "A brave little fellow. It's a pity."

Back they go, these stowaways—a dreaded lot, the scum of the earth. Each nursing his ambitions, desires, aspirations, disappointments, courage, they follow one another in a row, surrounded by two guards. For it must be remembered that stowaways are a dangerous lot and they have to be carefully guarded.

UNIFYING MEDICAL MISSIONS

By PALUEL J. FLAGG

THE dawn of Catholic Medical Missions, which came so quietly at the convention of the Catholic Hospital Association at Washington in 1922, has finally broadened into the full light of day. Heralded at the time as occurring in a divine sequence with the Propaganda Fide of 1622, and the Propagation of the Faith of 1822, the movement has grown from a committee of investigation to a national board, the representative of all mission congregations and societies in the United States and Canada.

During a two-day convention held at Manhattanville College, New York City, on June 11 and 12 of this year, the structure of the board was clarified and broadened, and the chief purposes of the organization were formulated as follows:

1. To make known in the United States and Canada the medical activities of Catholic missions for the conversion of non-Catholics and to encourage assistance to such activities whether by spiritual or material aid or by personal service in medical work, in lay or religious capacity.
2. To assist in giving medical training to mission candidates preparing in America.
3. To gather from the mission fields and to make known in the United States the requirements for medical mission workers.
4. To encourage Catholic students in mission lands to come to Catholic institutions in the United States for medical study.

A spiritual director and an assistant director were appointed, completing and crowning the Church's formal interest in the cause of medical missions in America.

The eternal youth of the Church and her unlimited capacity to meet actual needs as they occur are once more apparent in this modern form of charity. As the Propagation of the Faith owes its inception to the enthusiastic zeal of the laity, so has the problem of medical missions been first realized from the same source; this time, by the medical profession. The labors of Dr. Agnes McLaren, Dr. Margaret Lamont, Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, M.D., Dr. Robert Francis, Dr. Anna Dengel, Dr. E. O'Connor, Dr. Johanna Lyons, and Dr. Laurentine Rouchel, as well as zealous groups from Germany, Holland, France and Italy, gradually and insistently emphasized the need for medical organization in the missions. These and all the various other separate efforts in the field received, as it were, their recognition and their fulfilment in the conference of June 11.

That conference was remarkable not only in being both a conclusion and a starting-point for wider and better organized endeavor. It represented also an extraordinary achievement of unity out of diversity. A group of earnest, world-wise men, experts in the magnificent art of giving, but with views as divergent as the lands which they represented, joined in the harmony of a lofty and disinterested purpose. Representatives from India, China, the South Sea Islands, Alaska, the West Indies, and the land of the Indian and the abandoned Negro, appealed and yielded for the common cause, for the greatest good. The unity of desire, at the conclusion, spread itself across the spiritual horizon like a giant rainbow, each interest falling into its proper relation to all others.

From an interest sponsored by a group of laymen the work of the medical missions thus becomes a formal, organized activity of the Catholic Church. It is now the Church, in the person of her societies and communities, speaking through the director of the Medical Missions Board and its executive committee, which entreats us to do our bit for this world-wide cause.

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Especially does the Church say, in effect, to her doctors of medicine: "We beg you not to abandon us when we have left your parochial strand; we have need of your specialized knowledge, your expert advice. Not long ago Father Price died of a ruptured appendix. More recently still, Father McShane died of small-pox. Others are dying and are being invalided home. We appeal to your medical conscience to relieve this neglect and check the waste of these most precious lives. Give us your sympathy and your cooperation, as far as you are able. Let us have a worthy roster of Catholic medical men."

While we are naturally moved by the appeal of our sick religious and priests, the moral and physical destitution of the peoples of the Far East cannot fail to enlist our sympathy and assistance. Let us reflect for a few moments upon the actual conditions which may be found among nations whose eternal destiny is as glorious as our own.

Let us imagine ourselves in China. Dim, moving figures appear before us; strange, unfamiliar, active figures, hastening to and fro; a rickshaw swings toward us and is gone. Lighted balconies crowd over the narrow streets. Huddled in his rags, a leper sits with his begging bowl. He looks at us through the folds of his lion-like face. The thickened oedematous tissue is broken here and there by chronic ulceration; he lifts the stump of his hand, the fingers of which have been slowly amputated by neuritis, necrosis and secondary infection. As we pass by unheeding, a moan escapes him—the cry of the utterly forsaken. The shadows are darker here. A snarling, and the soft patter of dogs' feet stop us. Two dirty, mangy curs muzzle something on the ground; a beam of light from an open window falls upon it; the torn, naked body of a baby shocks our view. A latticed window near-by is blown open by the breeze; soft vines cling to it, and fragrant blossoms bloom upon it; within is a bed and a woman in labor; her eyes are closed, and her lips are bloodless. The native midwife curled upon the matting, overcome by the four days' vigil, starts at the sound of our passage. Ignorance and superstition are the attending physicians. Death is at the door, and at dawn he shall enter.

India. A forest surrounds us. Suddenly through a rift in the trees we see the moonbeams sparkling from the marble dome of a ghostlike temple. The minarets from many lesser shrines pierce the vibrant, starlit sky. An opening in the wood, and spread before us sleeps a broad, palm-rimmed lagoon.

The earth trembles; a loud trumpeting shakes the quiet air, and before we can move our feet in flight, a great white elephant crushes by us and plunges into the silver waters. A throng of Hindus crowd the bank to render homage to the sacred one of India. India, star of the East! The subtle fragrance of her philosophy has pervaded the world. Master of passions and the bestial, she seeks to prey upon the higher mind. Poppy-like, she soothes, and enervates, and calms, and gives a present for a future peace. But her cheek and glowing eye are febrile in their beauty. She has the Master's apparel, but her heart is sick with the infamy of her myriad child-widows, her cruel caste system, and the utter degradation of the mothers of her men.

Africa. The burning rays of a tropical sun are upon us; the cry of a child fills the air; a large clearing is seen, walled by the dense tropical jungle. At one end is a group of blacks rhythmically beating crude skin drums; in the center a circle of chiefs faces an elevated mound upon which is an altar. The trembling young mother near us hugs her crying child to her breast; a command, and she rises from the ground; clinging to her boy, she moves toward the sacrificial stone; she lays her little one—her only one—upon the cruel bed, and caresses it. She presses a kiss upon its lips as the gleaming knife disembowels it and the palpitating heart is held aloft, an expiation to the prince of evil.

He is the dark angel who rules here—rules souls who may have nothing between perdition and the love of Christ but your personal sacrifices; your actual service to maintain the health of the missionary who is to bring them the good tidings of great joy; your actual, personal service; your material sacrifice, and your prayer, their only chance of eternal bliss.

Catholic medical mission activities will safeguard the lives of our men and women on that deadly battle front, and will strengthen their hands with the power of God's most touching charity.

"In No Strange Land"

Not those who find Him here where once He trod,
And "Adsum" answers yet if man but nod,
Not these exlorers are of hidden God.

So worn earth's footway to His dwelling-place,
So clear creation's window frames His face,
That dark itself is starry with His grace.

But ah! the country of His far estate
Where mystery and wonder on Him wait,
They are the dauntless souls that penetrate!

With faith as sextant and with reason's lead,
Who sail the infinite gulfs to that roadstead,
And in their flesh drink of the Dayspring's head!

Aquinas, who charted God as men the sea,
Thérèse, so sure of roses yet to be,
She pledged beforehand her eternity!

These are explorers of the Continent,
Sailors that plumbed a depthless Element,
By time nor sense balked of their high intent.

To find Him here where He walks our green?
They found Him there where they had never been,
Saw with their eyes that which eye hath not seen!

CHARLES L. O'DONNELL.

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COMMUNICATIONS

AN APPRECIATION OF THE CHURCH OF ROME

Syracuse, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—My recent article, The Appeal of the Church of Rome, has brought to me so many expressions of thanks and of commendation that I am moved to write about a quality possessed by the members of that great Church which we non-Romans do not adequately or sufficiently appreciate, and that is their tender sensitiveness. It would not be an exaggeration if I were to call it a love of those who speak well of them. My experience all through my life has been of this character. It has shown me the injustice of the criticisms that have been made by those who do not understand Roman Catholics.

The average non-Romanist has a perverted mind and a narrow vision. He too frequently looks upon his Roman brethren as men and women who are wedded to an ecclesiastical system that is foreign to the spirit of the age in which we are living, priest-ridden and intolerant, and breathing damnation upon all who differ from it. If he grudgingly concedes that they go to church more regularly than other people, he explains it by saying they are afraid not to go. And then, when he describes their services, he usually calls them mechanical and unspiritual. And he unblushingly assures us that they would subject all those who differ from them to the rack and the fire, if they had a chance.

But it has happily been my lot to know, most intimately, many of the members of the Roman Church, and I can never begin to discharge the obligations I owe them. Among my friends have been bishops, priests and influential laymen, and my experience has taught me that the greatest men in the Roman Church are often the kindest.

I have always had my Roman brethren's confidence and love, and when I needed money for my work they were always ready to contribute. They did not, and they do not, come to my services, and I respect them for their compliance with the laws of their own Church. I wish that I could keep my people as true to their church as the Roman Catholics are! I wish I could keep them from sectarian meetings as they are kept! This isn't narrowness; it is policy—it is fidelity to truth—it is loyalty to the Bride of Christ.

And here I must make a confession. I have never tried to make a convert of a Roman Catholic. Through mixed marriages—which are an abomination—some have come to me. But I have never met one who gave me any joy. Other men, of course, may have had a different experience. I have had, during a ministry of nearly forty years, about a dozen members of my parishes who have come to us from the Church of Rome. But not one of them gave me any satisfaction, and I haven't hesitated to tell them so.

And when any of my own people have married Roman Catholics and left us for that Church, I have usually expressed my deep gratification, because—as I have told them—they will be forced into a deeper devotion to the Church and to the sacraments than they had previously shown.

My experience has taught me that when a man comes to us from Rome he grows careless about his religious duties, he doesn't come to Confession, he doesn't come to Mass as he once did, and no man can act in this way without injury to his soul.

You see I believe in all these things as earnestly as the most devoted of your readers. I couldn't be a Protestant—in the commonly understood meaning of that word. I am a Catholic,

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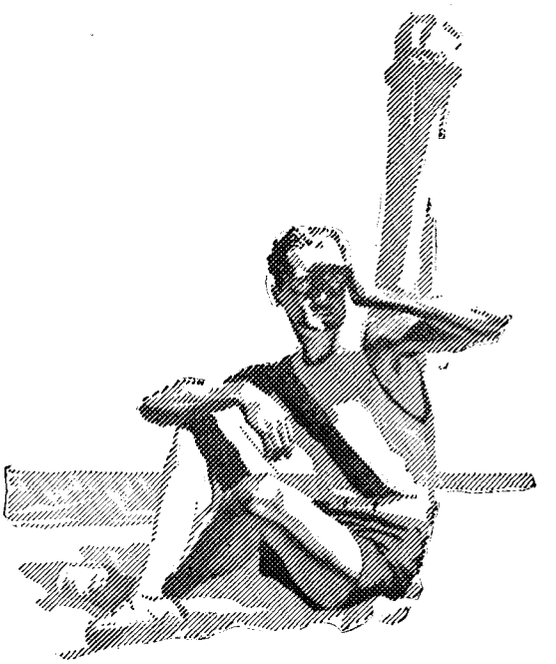

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and fully believe in the Catholicity of my church, and the validity of my priesthood. I believe in the seven sacraments, in a splendid ceremonial, and I glory in the spread of the Catholic Faith. The Catholic Faith is the only faith which can save the world, and the most ultra-Protestant are beginning to realize this. It is a dogmatic belief in the supremacy of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, which makes the Catholic Faith so appealing. It is in the affirmation of the miraculous—which is part and parcel of the Catholic system—that we touch reality.

The Protestant theory of religion is commemorative and subjective; the Catholic theory is perpetuative and objective, and these two theories form a chasm which God alone can bridge. But one encouraging feature of our religious life today is that we are beginning to understand each other, and to comprehend each other's difficulties, and the Protestant world is beginning to catch a vision of the glories of the Catholic Faith. What we all need is a thoughtful understanding of each other's position, and a large and tender—may I not say, also, an affectionate—sympathy in dealing with it.

If we possessed this sympathy there would be none of the silly opposition to the candidacy of such a man as Alfred E. Smith for the Presidency. It seems almost incredible that any sane, religious man should deny this high honor to a man whose life is so clean and pure, whose statesmanship is so generally acknowledged, whose administrative ability has been so marked throughout his political career, and whose love of his fellow-men is so conspicuous, simply because he happens to be a member of the Roman Catholic Church.

In closing this paper may I say a word about the religious atmosphere which pervades our Roman Catholic hospitals? In my western parish we had a large city hospital, and Saint Francis Roman Catholic. On one occasion I went to the former to see a very sick woman, and was refused admission—for the first time in my life. I stated that I had come to give the blessing of the church, but it made no difference. Fortunately I made such a protest that the incident was never repeated.

But some time after this I went to see a sick parishioner in Saint Francis, and on the door of her room was a sign, Visitors Not Admitted. I went to one of the sisters, and she took me at once to the sick room and assured me that such a sign was not intended for me, and that I would be welcomed to any part of the hospital at any time in the day or night. I loved, and still love, every brick in that building. Last Christmas I received a card of greeting from the sisters of that institution, and it touched me very deeply to be still remembered by them—after an absence of many years. Is it, therefore, any wonder that I love the Church of Rome, and am delighted to admit it? I would be an ingrate if I refused to love her.

Rev. Percy T. Fenn.

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

Webster Groves, Mo.

TO the Editor:—Let me congratulate The Commonweal on the excellent article by Mr. Whitridge, in its issue of August 3, celebrating the centenary of Charles Eliot Norton. Our secondary American authors of the last century are undeservedly forgotten, and such articles as this will stimulate interest in their work. Unless we have a fair acquaintance with such men as Norton, Stedman and Warner, we can never really learn to understand our literature.

Cyril Clemens,
President, Mark Twain Society.

THE NAVAL CONFERENCE

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—The Westminster Gazette is inclined to place upon the American delegates to Geneva the responsibility of failure to reach an agreement. Commander Kenworthy, Liberal of Parliament, seems to me to be more nearly right. He suggests that the problem was approached from the wrong angle: that the negotiating powers should first have had a political agreement—"something in the nature of an agreement between England and America outlawing war, as a preliminary to an agreement on armaments." He suggests further that the negotiators were confined "too exclusively to admiralty interests." There is a well of truth there. No civilian is likely to be as conversant with the details of a highly technical profession like the naval service, as a trained technician in that service. At the same time the whole training of a naval officer is and must be based upon war, the meeting of war problems and preparation for war (not necessarily against war) in time of peace.

American naval officers have been envious of England's naval supremacy and have admired the excellence of her "senior service" since the days when old Joshua Sands made it his private duty to challenge to a duel every officer of every British war vessel he met in port, from the captain down. British naval officers, backed by the whole English people, have put their whole strength into keeping up the high tradition of British supremacy.

It was not to be expected that either group of officers would cheerfully sacrifice either supremacy, on the one hand, or the chance of complete parity on the other. That has got to come, if it is to be, from the civilian population. There is ample evidence that an important part of England's civilian population is thinking that way. At the head of our own delegation we had the only "career" man in our diplomatic service who is qualified by experience and natural characteristics to speak for America with complete understanding of Britain. Negotiation in a matter of major national interest is, after all, largely a matter of trial and error.

William Franklin Sands.

A PROUD WAR RECORD

Belleville, Illinois.

TO the Editor:—I wonder how many young men of nineteen can point to a prouder record in the world war than that of John Joseph Kelly of Chicago? Barely nineteen when he enlisted in the marines, Kelly so distinguished himself on the Marne front, at Belleau Wood, at St. Mihiel and in the Argonne, as to receive the following awards: the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, the Victory and Marine Medals, the Medaille Militaire, the Legion of Honour, Croix de Guerre with palm and star, and Croix de Guerre with palm (France), the Belgian War Cross, and the Medal of Bravery, Montenegro.

I trust the American-Irish Historical Society has taken note of Kelly, as well as of his fellow-wearers of the Congressional Medal of Honor: Donovan, Donaldson, Hartigan, Grady, O'Neill, Shanahan, Ellis, Gaffney, Mallon, Lannon, Perkins, Furlong, McGonigal, Ryan, O'Shea, Regan and Walsh. And the list could probably be extended.

John Aldis.

The Commonweal invites its readers to send in communications on all topics of public interest, regardless of whether or not such topics have been previously discussed in its columns.

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BOOKS

Dante, by John Jay Chapman. Houghton Mifflin Company. New York: $2.50.

THIS volume makes the very pleasant revelation that we have still Dante lovers who are genuine Dante scholars, at least in the etymological sense of having spent leisure fruitfully in the study of Dante. Mr. Chapman himself apparently might deprecate the term "Dante scholar." His volume gives the evidence for it. Its theme is "disparagement of Dante's character, praise of him as a poet and a kind of amazed wonder about him as a force." Ruskin suggested that Dante is the central man of all the world, possessing in the highest degree the intellectual and moral force of the race. Mr. Chapman has exemplified this by his fine translations of great passages from Dante, so that his volume would make an excellent introduction to Dante study.

He has emphasized the fact that Dante's poem is not only a religious poem in the conventional sense of the word—that the Divine Comedy is Christianity in poetry—but that it is religious in a very personal sense: a penitential poem. Dante had "a specific and tremendous religious experience—his words are that God's love had recently re-created him—and it was this experience which led Dante to write the Divine Comedy." He had been wandering in darkness and there came to him light. "We thus come to see that the selva oscura is not merely a convenient term for the worldly life."

Mr. Chapman's translation of the passages he has selected from the Divine Comedy are marvelously well done. I know nothing that would give one a better idea in English of Dante's original. On the other hand, in view of the fact that he has penetrated Dante's meaning so well, it is surprising to find that he speaks of the poet's attempts at humor as lamentable.

If Dante really were without humor, as Mr. Chapman suggests, I for one would be sure to think that he was not the great poet that he is hailed. I suggest that surely the passages in the Inferno in which Dante adapts punishment to sin so ingeniously, represent humor of the veriest kind. It is grim but it is intensely humorous. In the third canto just inside the gate of Hell there are those who did neither evil nor good. Dante says there are so many of them that one would scarce believe that "death had undone such legions infinite." They are located with the angels who took no sides in the conflict in heaven when Lucifer rebelled. These neutral angels were not sent down into the depths of hell lest the devils should laugh at them—for there was to be no laughing in hell. They were set just inside the gate and were bitten by gnats and wasps since there was nothing else that was small enough to sting such small souls.

Or take the end of the eighth canto where the murmurers are punished. They grouched and growled about things here on earth and they are still at it there in hell. You cannot see them, you can only see the bubbles that rise to the surface, as they gurgle their unending complaints in their throats.

There are many other passages of the Inferno which have this same pathetic and unmistakable humor. There is no avenging Deity who stands over the dwellers in the Inferno and punishes them. Their own sins are sufficient punishment. They wail over their wasted opportunities, but there are no complaints in hell. They recognize that they have brought their punishment on themselves; and the punishment fits the crime with a completeness that is the very essence of humor.

JAMES J. WALSH.

The Voice of the Catholic Layman

On all matters of public interest, literature, the arts, and public affairs, The Commonweal speaks the mind of the Catholic layman. It is admittedly a special viewpoint that is not represented by any other publication. Readable, stimulating, thought-provoking, it is a necessity for the intelligent.

"To restore a Catholic imagination and sensibility which have been withered and parched for four centuries, thanks to the triumph of a purely lay literature whose ultimate corruption we are witnessing today"—this is M. Paul Claudel's admirable statement of the task of Catholic writers in our time. The quotation is taken from Mr. George N. Shuster's article, "Claudel to Riviere," in the current issue of The Commonweal, the article itself being a careful study of Mr. Henry Longan Stuart's translation of "Letters to a Doubter," by Paul Claudel. Both the reviewer and the translator are members of the editorial staff of The Commonweal, a journal which is dedicated to the very cause which M. Claudel has so well defined. Some two or three decades from now, when the beginnings of this Catholic literary restoration are traced and its history written, along with the names of Patmore, Peguy, Chesterton and Claudel, there will be found, we are confident, the names of the little band of American writers who constitute the first staff of the "weekly review of literature, the arts, and public affairs," known as The Commonweal. It is surely making its mark.—*From the Ave Maria of June 4th.*

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Was Jesus an Historical Person? by Elwood Worcester, D.D. New York: Oxford University Press. $1.25.

TO THE question proposed in his title, Dr. Worcester gives a vigorous affirmative answer. The two sermons that make up this volume were delivered in Emmanual Church, Boston, as an answer to the "Christ Myth" theory. Believing that he has made the defense of this theory more difficult, the author offers his evidence "not only to this congregation but to the country, to anyone who may care to make use of it." The reader's anticipation of something new and final is increased by the following statements: "I happen to have sources of information which most literary critics do not possess. . . . I happen to have one qualification for speaking on a certain aspect of our Gospels which many better men and better scholars do not possess and which I do not intend to forego."

The first group of witnesses are the familiar pagan and Jewish texts. Pliny, Suetonius, and Tacitus are quoted but there is no attempt to deal with the controversies which have arisen about the value of their testimony. Handling the Talmud and Josephus, Dr. Worcester is seen to better advantage. The difficulties of the classical passage in the "Antiquities," viz., the Christian tone and the break in the context, are discussed at some length. The latter point is treated in the light of the old Russian version of the Aramaic edition of the Jewish Wars. That the clue may be found in that quarter has already been suggested by several scholars and Dr. Worcester reproduces their interesting theory.

The Christian witnesses are Saint Paul and the evangelists. The most noteworthy point in this part of the book is the writer's attempt to defend the gospel miracles by his personal experience of modern therapeutics. Demoniacal possession and miracles of healing offer no difficulties to him. But he is silent about the other cases which make up about one-fifth of the miracles in the synoptics and more than that in Saint John. And though Dr. Worcester's reduction of the miraculous to the operation of psychic and spiritual laws and his exclusion of the special direct intervention of God has analogies with a Thomistic theory as against the views of Suarez and Malebranche, one can hardly endorse it as it stands.

There are a few errors of detail. Pliny's mission to Bythinia is dated 103 instead of 111. The controversial purpose of the Apostles' Creed is still open to question. The theory under fire in Dr. Worcester's argument is a modern one, not, as he states more than once, an ancient one. I can recall no heresiarchs of Christian antiquity who shared the views of Drews, Carpenter and William Benjamin Smith. Even the Gnostic and Docetic doctrines can hardly be considered as the forerunners of the "Christ Myth."

J. M. EGAN.

Chile, and Its Relations with the United States, by Henry Clay Evans, jr., Ph.D. Durham: Duke University Press. $2.50.

PROFESSOR EVANS, of the University of Florida, has added a new contribution to the steadily growing volume of American historical research. Under the direction of Secretary Kellogg, Mr. Richard Olds, Under-Secretary of State, and Mr. Tyler Dennett, chief of the Division of Publications and editor of the Department of State, our diplomatic archives have been opened to responsible writers in a way that has never been possible before. It is an enlightened policy which more than any other will contribute to the upbuilding of American diplomacy, by restatement of fundamental policy, by exposing the difficulties of accomplishment, by noting success and its causes, and finally by showing up the instances wherein diplomacy may have gone astray.

The positive benefit of their policy cannot be too greatly emphasized, with every new volume which appears as a result.

Chile stands out in our diplomatic history as an example of haphazard and unconstructive diplomacy. Chilean historians will agree that from the beginning of our relations these presented one of the most difficult fields of inter-American statesmanship. North American special agents intent on opening masonic chapters in ultra-conservative Catholic countries; American representatives taking sides in domestic controversy, holding commissions in the native armed forces; promising the backing of Washington to the candidate of their personal choice, and invariably backing the losing side; North American "republicans" participating actively in Chilean politics in opposition to an aristocratic oligarchy; an American minister entering into a personal quarrel with a Chilean archbishop; money claims arising from arbitrary enforcement of revolutionary blockade by a British admiral in Chilean service, and arbitrary disregard of his regulations by "Boston men" still smarting from 1812; the appointment as American representative, when relations between British and Americans in Chile were most tense, of an Irish patriot not long an American citizen; the turning loose of more than a hundred American sailors on shore leave at a moment when anti-American feeling ran particularly high; and finally the struggle of three mutually suspicious, partisan, inexperienced and ambitious American ministers in the most delicate negotiation (Tacna-Arica) yet arisen in the field of South American diplomacy, are all steps in a record which is very far from being a brilliant page in our history.

It is true that Chilean domestic politics and foreign relations were intricate and difficult in the first eighty years of independence—as were our own. It is true that an ancient mutual antipathy hung over the relations of Spanish Catholic and (for want of a better word) "Anglo-Saxon" Protestant. Only those Catholics of Latin extraction can fully realize, perhaps, the difficulty of that relation. All these facts, however, should have led to particular care, whereas they actually did not. Our record in Chile does not fit with our record of diplomatic achievement in Europe during the same initial period.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

The Venerable Don Bosco, by J. B. Lemoyne, S.C. New Rochelle: Salesian Institute. $2.00.

ALTHOUGH not a biography, the book is what it intends to be, "character sketches" of the great man whose process of canonization has just been inaugurated. The book makes its appearance at a time when the preventive care of youth is uppermost in the mind of educators and the educated public. "Few in this world have submitted themselves to such fatigues in order to gain the hearts of boys, and to make use of these affections in order to educate them in a holy manner. To accomplish this, was Don Bosco's motive in always remaining among his boys."

A large part of the book of 320 pages deals with Don Bosco's preventive system of training. "To prevent, and not to repress" was his motto. As successful means he advocates: vigilance, religious influence and kindness. With regard to vigilance, he recommends: "At the very beginning I acquaint myself with the morally dangerous boys, and I distinguish them into two classes: the bad, or corrupt in manners, and those who habitually disobey the rules. . . . Let us suppose that

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in an institute of 500 boys, there is one bad boy; another one comes who is also infected with vice. . . . They have never known or seen each other. Yet, on the first or second day . . . and sometimes even after only a few hours, you will see them together in recreation. It seems that an evil spirit helps them to know each other, and that a magnet of the devil attracts them. . . . The saying 'tell me with whom you go, and I will tell you what you are,' is a criterion to go by to find out the scabby sheep who are in danger of becoming wolves. Another class of pupils must not be tolerated in the house. When you have a boy who seems to be good, but is careless and easily absents himself . . . and you often find him alone . . . , keep a vigilant eye on him. Do not be deluded by apparent timidity, solitary character, lightmindedness or ingenuity. Such a one knows how to simulate what he is not. . . . Such pupils are very dangerous."

In Don Bosco's system religion is the most important, the predominant and most effective means for success. In whatever religious practices he advocates he makes it his rule to encourage but never to urge by applying either moral force or the institutional regulations.

Regarding kindness, "Don Bosco's method of education is a perennial echo of the 'suffer little children to come unto me,' and draws its efficacy from the same sources used by the Divine Saviour: sweetness and meekness."

Whatever he did for those under his care, was prompted by the desire to save souls. He considered the guidance of boys a pastoral and therefore a truly priestly activity. In this he is in harmony with the Church, but greatly at variance with the ultra-modern boyologists, who desire it to be understood "that there is no such thing as a Catholic-boy problem as such," and who maintain that lay leaders are sufficient to provide the religious element.

Reading the book, one immediately associates Don Bosco, with the other great Franciscan Tertiaries and leaders of youth like Saint Philip Neri, Saint John Baptist de la Salle, Saint Joseph Calasanctius, and others who made distinct contributions to the education and psychology of boys. Don Bosco is in the strict sense of the word a modern leader and his principles as applied by his spiritual sons, the Salesians, are as effective now as they were half a century ago. His practical idealism is shown on every page of the book.

The character sketches have a universal appeal, but should be of special interest to priests, religious, directors of institutions or boarding schools, parents, teachers and probation officers. The literary finish of the book leaves nothing to be desired. Fortunately, its very low cost—considering its size and make-up—brings it within the means of most of the readers who are interested in this vital subject.

KILIAN J. HENNRICH.

The Abilities of Man: Their Nature and Measurement, by C. Spearman. New York: The Macmillan Company. $4.50.

DR. SPEARMAN seems successful enough in pointing out the equivocality attaching to the word "intelligence" in modern psychology, and consequently the confusion attaching to the mental tests. He seems to be justified in his sweeping criticism: "Test results and numerical tables are further accumulated; consequent action affecting the welfare of thousands of persons is proposed, and even taken, on the ground of—nobody knows what!"

However, I doubt if Dr. Spearman has done very much to substitute a clearer idea of intelligence, or a sounder theoretical basis for the tests so popular today. In the final chapter,

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summing up his conclusions, he modestly tells us that "First and foremost among the results of all these investigations has been a Copernican revolution in point of view. We have not —as all others—set out from an ill-defined mental entity the 'intelligence,' and then sought to obtain a quantitative value characterizing this. Instead we have started from a perfectly defined quantitative value 'g,' and then have demonstrated what mental entity or entities this really characterizes."

In his revolutionary Copernican psychology, Dr. Spearman has discovered several other planets, or suns, or stars—"c," "w," and "s." Yet I fail to see that they form any better basis than we had for the "scientific treatment of 'intelligence' . . . with its aims at reforming education, at revitalizing industry, at reshaping the laws of immigration, at dictating the right to have children, at upsetting the very constitution of society."

I was educated under the old-fashioned system that predicated certain mental faculties, and undertook to train them. For a while I thought that Dr. Spearman was going to give us something in support of this system. But I must confess that I got lost in the mazes of "s," "g," "w," "c." If there is anything of lasting value and significance in them, it will take a great deal more working over to bring it out.

T. Elliot Ross.

Iridion, by Count Zygmunt Krasinski; translated from the Polish by Florence Noyes and edited with an introduction by George Rapall Noyes. New York: Oxford University Press. $2.50.

THE translator of this volume gives us the lyric expression and impassioned poetry in prose that is true to the poet he is translating.

The work of Polish writers, and especially Krasinski, is universal. It has been the case with all of Poland's artists that their universality has made them anything but national. I have in mind Chopin and Conrad—and recently I have been reading of Mr. Mencken's attempts in his Prejudices (Fifth Series) to take from Apollinaire his Polish lineage. In the field of art there seems to be a fourth partition of Poland.

The book is primarily for scholars—and what casual reader has ever heard of the author? But here is a book that does not primarily interest nationalistic Poles but Christians in general. Iridion, the Greek, cries vengeance against the Roman empire for the destruction of his fatherland. The only vengeance he can conceive of is the destruction of the empire. He sacrifices his sister and his beloved Cornelia for the advancement of his plans. He makes friends with the Christians under Bishop Victor with the idea of having them help, unknowingly, in destroying the city. And finally he sells his own soul to satan (Masinissa) for the successful destruction of Rome. So far Krasinski's thought is in harmony with that of Mickiewicz and Slowacki. Poland (as symbolized in the character of Iridion) must go forward crying, "To arms! To arms!"

Iridion fights in vain. All his plans fail and Rome stands triumphant. But Masinissa promises him that he shall rise after a thousand years and come to witness the destruction of Rome. The prophecy is fulfilled and in the conclusion Iridion sees the Roman empire in dust and ashes. It is the Rome that Krasinski himself visited at one time. There is the wooden cross in the Colosseum. Masinissa comes to claim the soul of Iridion but Cornelia's prayers are heard and in a great struggle Masinissa is defeated.

In the conclusion we see that philosophy of non-resistance and self-abnegation that distinguishes the author from the other Polish poets. It is this that makes him the Christian poet. "He modified the character of the Polish people . . . so that women and children, unarmed, bared their breasts to the bullets (of Russians firing on a Polish banner) in a frenzy of patriotic self-sacrifice."

The introduction is valuable only as giving a résumé of the story for the unitiated. The translation which has lost little of Krasinski's thought and expression is marvelously done and may be recommended to those who read Polish and English.

Raymond Kresensky.

Red Pants, by John W. Thomason, jr., Captain, U. S. Marine Corps. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

TEN stories are adorned with fifty-six illustrations which are the glory of the book. The author draws as he writes —realistically and, so to speak, in the vernacular. He bayoneted his way into the citadel of fame in a previous work: in this one he consolidates the position and extends his flanks. In The Marines Have Landed, an innocent, indomitable noncom emerges from a New York gang fight with the situation well in hand, and from there the stories take one via Central America to the Pacific where, in Mail Day, one is given a poignant bit of descriptive writing, as anyone will agree who has ever listened in vain to the voice of the mail orderly.

Only two stories, Red Pants and Luck, touch on the world war. In the former, a stalwart black Galveston stevedore finds the resplendent nether habiliments of the Moroccan division irresistible and joins Mangin's famous corps; the latter tells about something as old as love or war, a talisman. A captured German swagger-stick becomes the fairy wand that wins its captor's sweetheart.

A Soldier of Liberty and Ambush are Central American stories. Here the author temporarily forsakes his beloved leathernecks and makes a personal reconnaissance in the tropics. If his object is to see whether he can widen his field independently of the marines, then Captain Thomason has accomplished his mission: both the above tales shine by contrast, for instance, with The Conquest of Mike and The Odyssey of a Little Dog, in which, in order to stick to the marines, a dubious mascot is made to reel under the weight of the author's genius.

Although one hopes he will not desert the marines entirely, he need not limit his scope exclusively to the corps. He is more than a gifted officer, the double genius of whose pen is mightier than his forty-five—he knows the tropics, he has insight into human nature. There is more than mere sketching of types, there is keen delineation of character in his tales. In Red Pants, for example, the author shows sympathetic penetration past the happy-go-lucky, childish surface of Negro temperament to the genuine dignity and manliness that often underlie it and are so universally overlooked; again, in the redoubtable Sergeant Hook one glimpses the self-respecting noncommissioned officer who is a finer and more representative type than the notorious but admirable Sergeant Quirt of What Price Glory. There is a Private Kemper in every average company. Also, Tito, the innocent victim of manipulated, pinchbeck patriotism is well drawn as one type of Latin-American. Finally, one is grateful for the fact that in none of the stories is the eagle made to scream, and respects the honest reference in one passage to the financial background of one brand of Central American revolution.

R. M. Patterson, jr.

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THE QUIET CORNER

"I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library."—C. LAMB.

"The sight of a person writing with his left hand, and usually holding his paper as though it were a sword for his breast, has for a long time given me a malaise that I have not been able to describe." Doctor Angelicus, just back from his yacht club, was in a distinctly ruminative mood as he wiped from his glasses the seashore fog that had settled upon them. "I have always held my pen and paper in the orthodox fashion taught me by Brother Scribnerius in the grammar school: I have remained true to the pointed pen and abominated the stubby steel brushes affected by fashionable women in their intimate correspondence. Black ink has been my only pigment. I have practised an avoidance of green and red writing fluids, and felt a revulsion from the purpureal tinctures of naughty widows and savage-minded celibates. At last I am vindicated in my bias by the report of Colonel H. F. Fenn from the Kivu country in Belgian Congo that the gorilla is a left-handed animal and uses its right arm merely to support its nether limbs while it attacks with the sinister member. I now see a tradition for Nordau (or was it Lombroso? These scientists have such a way of becoming old-fashioned!) in declaring that left-handed people showed signs of civilized undevelopment. I know I have always looked dubiously at one of my old friends who is ambidextrous and yet clever on both sides in being able to shift a pen, a knife, a tennis racket or a baseball bat from one hand to another. Somebody should write a treatise on the left-handed; if there is such a volume I have never come across it."

"You mean, I suppose, Doctor, a book written entirely by an author's left hand," suggested Hereticus, "even if we found it necessary to tie his right hand behind his back in order to secure it?"

Miss Angelica stopped her typing long enough to expostulate: "O Doctor, you are horrid this morning! Don't you know that most babies are left-handed at birth; now our darling little James has just the cutest—"

"Stop, Angelica, no more of this: we are in the Library not the nursery now!"

* * *

Some of our placards add much to the joys of our life in trolley-cars and subways, and the other day brought a number of strange sights. We had scarcely started up Fifth Avenue when I noticed on the window of a rather bedizened shop the sign "Georgette's Beauty Parlor—Nil Desperandum," a slogan of hope and promise for even the most jaded and faded. On the next street I came across this humanitarian piece of blue-birdism—"Say It With Flowers"—under which the progressive florist had added in smaller print, "We specialize in cactus plants." From Broadway the great signs told us in glaring letetrs of the film star "Nazimova—Stronger Than Death," while down another street shone the sign, "Constance Talmadge—Ladies Must Live." Nearby was another sloganic gem—"Dinty's. Eat Here and You Will Never Eat Elsewhere," which reminded me of the "Momento Mori" restaurant in Bleecker Street, and the wily signs on the Brooklyn Bridge of "Be Wise and Eat at Solomon's on the Bowery."

Crossing the driveway we stopped for a speeding ice-wagon with the startling name of "A. Demoni, Ice Dealer"; and arriving within the spacious portals of the Grand Central Station we were hailed by the noble motto of "Quercus e parvis glandibus," showing that culture was still guiding our journeys.

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"The apartment-house dweller never knows a real home, for in his habitat there can be no garret. This thought came over me," said Doctor Angelicus, "after I had read the touching lines of that Hudson river poetess, Minna Irving. With her usual verve she writes in The Wedding Gift:

> "'In the garret under the sleeping eaves
> Stood Grandmother Granger's old hair trunk,
> With battered bureaus and broken chairs,
> And a spinning wheel and similar junk'—

"Arousing a wealth of visions of wax flowers under glass, macramé knittings for chairs and sideboards, illuminated whisk-broom holders, gilt rolling-pins to hold neckties, old ping-pong sets, Rogers groups minus their noses and other elemental members; piano-lamps and onyx clocks, double beds and the cradles in which Uncle John and Aunt Jane were born; discarded sewing-machines and dressmakers' forms that show the alterations of the feminine figure; crayon enlargements of family portraits, molasses-colored paintings of rich and dead old Grand-uncle Thomas; auto-harps without strings, and folding side-board beds; old hats and faded ribbons and flowers, hoop-skirts and bustles—a glorious jumble of the 'similar junk' so touchingly alluded to by the poetess of the Hudson."

"While you are lamenting the passing of the garret and arraigning the apartment house for that defect," remarked Britannicus, "do not forget, my dear Doctor, the simultaneous disappearance of the cellar. Where nowadays in our Park Avenue quarters can I find room to store my favorite cannel coal, my sea-dipped logs, whose salt gave forth that exquisite green flame on our old-time fireplaces: where is the place for our jugs of cider and apple-jack, not to mention the red-corked dozens that slumbered comfortably on their sides; the heaped-up potatoes where old Joel Simpson and his college chum, Obadiah, used to spend the long winter evenings picking off the eyes from their favorite Early Roses and Blue Ohios?

"Days of kitchenettes and cellarettes—who will now grow strong shaking down the furnace and carrying the coal for Bridget and Gretchen? When gasoline flows so freely and electricity cooks our meals, illumines our tables, shampoos and curls our tresses, and lights our cigarettes? Ah, Angelicus, think of the burning logs and Old Dog Tray, the whistling chimneys that we hear no more."

"'You are old, Father William,' as the poet says, my friend—how about a stave from Auld Lang Syne? For we still have the ham, even if the bread above and below has gone."

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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